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CONSUMER TIME

R-144

EDIBIE GREENS

NETWORK: NBC

DATE: May 22, 1943

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(Produced by the Food Distribution Administration of the Department of Agriculture. This script is for reference only, and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title, CONSUMER TIME, is restricted to network broadcasts of this program, presented for ten years in the interest of consumers.)

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER... RINGS TWICE...

2. MAN: (SIMPLY) This is CONSUMER TIME.

3. SOUND: MONEY IN TILL... CLOSE DRAWER...

4. WOMAN: That's your money buying food.

5. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.

6. MAN: That's your money paying for a home.

7. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.

8. WOMAN: That's your money buying clothes.

9. MAN: Buying you a living in wartime.

10. SOUND: CASH REGISTER... CLOSE DRAWER...

11. VOICE: The Consumer News of the Week — interpreted by your consumer reporter, Johnny Smith —
12. JOHN: The war orders straight from Washington!
13. VOICE: (ON FILTER) OPA withdraws order on compulsory grade labeling of canned fruits and vegetables and makes other provisions to inform consumers.
14. JOHN: Carners of fruits and vegerables may label the can to tell you what quality of food is inside, but they don't have to. But even if the grade is not marked on the label, you will be able to tell what quality of food you are getting, because the new OPA order provides —
15. VOICE: (ON FILTER) Community ceiling prices being issued by OPA will list canned goods by grade.
16. JOHN: SO — by looking at your ceiling price list, you can know the exact grade and price limit of every brand of canned fruits and vegetables on your grocer's shelves.
17. FREYMAN: Well, that's good news!
18. JOHN: Indeed it is. That price list is your protection — if you use it. And among the good news of the week comes word that more crisp new greens are coming on the market.

22. FREYMAN: On what market, Johnny: I haven't been able to find any lettuce for a week.
23. JOHN: I didn't say lettuce, Mrs. Freyman. I said greens. There are lots of kinds beside lettuce - salad greens as well as cooking greens.
24. FREYMAN: Well, I haven't been able to get any endive either - or water cress.
25. JOHN: And I still say there are edible greens all around you - some of them to be had free for picking.
26. FREYMAN: What for instance? If I just knew what to pick ----
27. JOHN: Well, I'll tell you first one thing not to pick - or rather, I'll let Cy tell you. You know Cy Briggs, from the Food Distribution Administration.
28. FREYMAN: Sure. He used to appear on this program. Hello Cy.
29. BRIGGS: (FADING IN) Hello there, Mrs. Freyman.
30. JOHN: Cy came mighty near not getting here today.
31. FREYMAN: Oh?

32. JOHN: In fact, he came near not getting anywhere -- except maybe heaven -- or wherever he's headed for.
33. BRIGGS: (PROTESTING) Now, Johnny ---
34. JOHN: His wife's been trying to bump him off.
35. BRIGGS: She may -- if she's listening in to you. Cut that out.
36. FREYMAN: Say, what's this all about, anyhow?
37. JOHN: You tell her, Cy. The true-life story of Cy Briggs -- or the rhubarb poison case.
38. FREYMAN: The rhubarb poison ---
39. BRIGGS: Well, you see -- it's like this, Mrs. Freyman ... The other night I came home for dinner, and found my wife in the kitchen ---
40. SOUND: FADE IN KITCHEN EFFECTS -- COVER PLACED ON PAN.
41. RITA: (FADING IN) Hello, Cy.
42. BRIGGS: Hello, darling. (PAUSE. KISS) What's cookin'?
43. RITA: Greens. I just put them on when I saw you coming down the street.

44. BRIGGS: (SNIFFING) Mmm! Ahhhh! You know, Rita - I think that's the secret of it. You don't over-cook them.
45. RITA: That's what Dorothy says. She always complains that in other places - the places where she eats lunch - they cook greens half to death.
46. BRIGGS: They do, Just make a mush out of them. Where is Dorothy?
47. RITA: Upstairs I guess. Here - will you put some of these things on the table?
48. BRIGGS: Okay.
49. SOUND: SLIGHT RATTLE OF DISHES.
50. DOROTHY: (FADING IN) Hi, Pops.
51. BRIGGS: Hello, Honey. What did you do today?
52. DOROTHY: Can't tell. It's a military secret.
53. BRIGGS: Now, listen, young lady - just because you work in the War Department isn't any sign ---
54. DOROTHY: What did you do - in Agriculture?
55. BRIGGS: Oh - studied a bunch of pamphlets and papers about fruits and vegetables. Found out some interesting things, too. There was one leaflet - on rhubarb ---

56. RITA; Cy -- these greens are ready now -- if you want to take them
in ----
57. BRIGGS; Okay --- Gee, they look good.
58. DOROTHY; And you can give me an extra big helping.
59. BRIGGS; All right ----
60. SOUND; SPOON ON PLATE, SERVING.
61. BRIGGS; This enough for you?
62. DOROTHY; Fine. Nice, crisp green greens.
63. BRIGGS; Guess our mother knows how to fix 'em -- huh?
64. DOROTHY; I guess so!
65. RITA; And the best thing about these greens -- they didn't cost
us a cent. I just used the tops of food we already had.
66. BRIGGS; Very smart of you my dear. Will you let me have that
vinegar next, Dorothy?Thanks.
67. DOROTHY; I thought these looked like beet greens.
68. RITA; Well, there weren't quite enough beet greens to go
around, so I put some other tops in with them.



69. BRIGGS: Very smart. Especially now -- in wartime. We ought to use up everything that's good for food.
70. DOROTHY: What other tops, Mom?
71. RITA: Oh, Radish leaves ---
72. DOROTHY: Radish leaves!
73. BRIGGS: Why not? Didn't you know that those are good to eat?
74. DOROTHY: (DOUBTFULLY) Just a minute ... I'll tell you better after I've tasted them.
75. RITA: They aren't all radish leaves. I put in some rhubarb tops too.
76. BRIGGS: Some what? Dorothy! Don't eat that!
77. DOROTHY: Huh?
78. BRIGGS: Put down that fork! Don't touch those greens.
79. RITA: But Cy -- I didn't use the big tough leaves of the rhubarb. I just used the little tender parts, next to the stalk.
80. BRIGGS: Doesn't matter. They're all poison.
81. RITA: Poison!

82. BRIGGS: I read it today in that Department leaflet. Rhubarb leaves contain a good deal of oxalic acid. They should be left entirely alone, and not under any circumstances used as food.
83. RITA: Well! Of all things!
84. DOROTHY: You mean the rhubarb stalks don't contain oxalic acid?
85. BRIGGS: Not enough to bother us. The little acid that rhubarb stalks do contain is in a different form, and perfectly harmless.
86. RITA: How queer!
87. BRIGGS: Why?
88. RITA: Well, I should think the stalk and the leaves would all contain the same sort of stuff.
89. BRIGGS: Why should they? You might as well say that beet leaves should have the same sort of stuff in them as the beets themselves.
90. RITA: Or that tomatoes should have the same food values as the vines they grow on.
91. Briggs: That's it. And we all know that those two parts of the plant are very different.

92. RITA: But Cy, dear - is the poison in rhubarb tops really dangerous?
93. BRIGGS: That leaflet said that many cases of illness and some deaths have been reported - both in this country and in Europe - from eating rhubarb leaves.
94. RITA: Well, good heavens! Guess I'd better be more careful what I feed my family!
95. DOROTHY: (LAUGHING) And Dad thought you were so smart - using everything that's good to eat!
96. BRIGGS: I still think that's smart, but I think we'd better find out what is good - and what isn't.
97. RITA: Oh, would you, Cy? I'd really like to know - before I do any more experimenting.
98. BRIGGS: Sure - I'll look up all the facts on edible greens - at the Department of Agriculture.
99. RITA: And wild greens too. Will you, Dad? There must be lots of things growing wild around here that are good to eat - if we only knew.
100. BRIGGS: Okay . I'll look that up too.

101. DOROTHY: Oh, that's swell. I've always wondered about those - ever since I was a Girl Scout. I'd like to know what I can eat, out in the woods and fields - and what I can't.

(PAUSE)

102. BRIGGS: (NARRATIVE STYLE) And so that's what I've been doing, Mrs. Freyman - along with Johnny here. We've been digging up all the facts on what greens may be eaten and which ones should be left alone.

103. FREYMAN: Well, have you found any more dangerous ones, Cy - beside rhubarb leaves? That is, among the common garden things we might happen to use as greens?

104. BRIGGS: No, I don't believe so. Did we Johnny?

105. JOHN: No, but we've found a lot of things you can use as greens - some things I'd never heard of.

106. FREYMAN: Like what, Johnny?

107. JOHN: Oh - turnip tops - and kale - and collards -

108. FREYMAN: Those aren't new, Johnny. Southerners have been eating those greens for years.

109. JOHN: Maybe so, but I'll bet you a lot of northerners don't know about them. And now's the time we all ought to learn - if we're going to get the very most nourishment out of our food supply.
110. FREYMAN: All right. What other startling facts did you unearth?
111. JOHN: Well - did you ever hear of borage or land cress?
112. FREYMAN: No——
113. JOHN: Or Hanover salad — or broccoli rabe?
114. FREYMAN: Are those names of greens?
115. JOHN: They certainly are. There's really no need for you to learn those names because your store might not happen to have them anyhow. But the point I want to make is that there are lots of different kinds of greens.
116. FREYMAN: And so -- instead of just going into a store and asking for the names we do know -- it might be smart to ask the store-keeper what he has.
117. JOHN: That's the idea. And try new things -- in new ways. You may be agreeably surprised -- the way I was the other night when my wife served me spinach salad.
118. FREYMAN: You mean -- raw spinach leaves?

119. JOHN: That's right. She couldn't get any lettuce, so she used young spinach leaves -- with a little hard-boiled egg grated over them, and French dressing.
120. FREYMAN: How did it taste, Johnny?
121. JOHN: Delicious. Like a completely different vegetable. And by the way -- whether you cook greens or serve them raw be sure, you wash them clean. There's nothing that will spoil my appetite for spinach quite so quickly as a few grains of sand.
122. FREYMAN: I agree with you there!
123. JOHN: And remember -- all greens lose some of their food value in the cooking. How much they lose depends on you.
124. FREYMAN: I noticed that Cy Briggs' wife cooks her greens very slightly.
125. JOHN: That's the best way. Just cook them enough to wilt them -- or so they're tender. Not so much that you take all the crispness out of them.
126. FREYMAN: I suppose the heat should be turned low.
127. JOHN: At the start. And if the greens are tender and succulent, you may not have to add any extra water to them -- just what clings to them after washing.

128. FREYMAN: Well, I don't put much water on my vegetables, Johnny, but there's always more than I expect when I get through.
129. JOHN: That's because some juice cooks out of them. If you start them at a low heat, enough juice should cook out to provide the liquid they need.
130. FREYMAN: Guess I'll have to experiment with using less water.
- 130 a. JOHN: Just enough to keep the vegetables from burning. And if you do have liquid left over -- I guess I needn't tell you not to pour any vitamins and minerals down the sink.
131. FREYMAN: Not any more. I save every bit of cooking water I drain off our vegetables.
132. JOHN: Do you use it in soups?
133. FREYMAN: Yes -- both canned soups and home-made. And sometimes -- when a lot of those vegetable juices have added up -- I mix them together, add a little seasoning, and serve that to my family instead of tomato juice.
134. JOHN: Very smart.
135. FREYMAN: But look, Johnny. I don't want to get you too far off the subject of greens. You haven't told us yet about the wild ones that are good to eat.

136. JOHN: Oh, that's right. Well, you probably know about dandelion greens. You can eat them either cooked or raw.
137. FREYMAN: Aren't they rather tough?
138. JOHN: Not if you cut them before the flowers bloom. Most greens are best when young. Another edible weed that plagues most home-owners is plantain.
139. FREYMAN: Plantain...does that have smooth, shiny leaves with ribs in them - sort of oval-shaped leaves?
140. JOHN: That's it. Hugs the ground.
141. FREYMAN: Uh-huh. Our lawn is full of that stuff. Sometimes there's stalks that grow straight up in the middle.
142. JOHN: Well, if you can get hold of the plantain before that stalk shoots up - when the leaves are still young and tender - you'll have something good to eat --
143. FREYMAN: Well, I'm glad to know those ornery weeds are good for something. Should we cook them, Johnny - or eat them raw?
144. JOHN: I like them raw. First we wash them thoroughly. Then crisp them by wrapping them in a damp cloth and putting them in the refrigerator. Then shred the leaves and mix them in with other greens for salads.



145. FREYMAN: Well, I'm actually looking forward to weeding our lawn!
Any more weeds that we can eat?
146. JOHN: Yes, I have several here -- listed on this Consumer Tips
Card.
147. FREYMAN: Let's see them, Johnny ----- "Dock -- wild chickory, poke,
purslane, lamb's quarters -----!"
148. JOHN: That card will tell you how to identify the different
ones -- when to pick them -- how to use them, and so on.
149. FREYMAN: I think this will be fun!
150. JOHN: It is. And profitable fun too.
151. FREYMAN: It ought to save us some money.
152. JOHN: Yes, but I meant profitable from your own health
standpoint. Greens are an important part of your diet,
you know. In fact, they're so important that I've asked
an expert from the Department of Agriculture to come here
today and talk to us just about that.
153. FREYMAN: Mr. Bartlett?
154. JOHN: Yes -- Mr. Arthur C. Bartlett -- Special Assistant to the
Director of the Food Distribution Administration -----
155. BARTLETT: (FADING IN) I don't think I can claim that title anymore,
Johnny -- of Special Assistant.

156. JOHN: You can't?
157. BARTLETT: No. You see, I'm leaving that job to go back to writing and editing -- from now on I'm merely a consultant of FDA.
158. JOHN: But you still know all the answers.
159. BARTLETT: Well, nobody knows all the answers, but I'll see what I can do with your questions.
160. FREYMAN: Well, I have one.
161. BARTLETT: All right, Mrs. Freyman.
162. FREYMAN: Just how important are greens in our diet?
163. BARTLETT: Well, I'm no nutritionist, but I've been around enough of them long enough -- and attended enough nutrition conferences -- to know that greens are one of the things they consider absolutely necessary to good health.
164. FREYMAN: Well,^{do}/you happen to know what's in greens, Mr. Bartlett, that makes them so important?
165. BARTLETT: Yes, there's Vitamin A -- for one thing. Or rather -- the stuff our bodies use to manufacture Vitamin A.

166. FREYMAN: How do you mean - Manufacture?
167. BARTLETT: I don't know how. But it seems that all green leaves - or yellow vegetables, like carrots - contain a substance known as carotein. And somehow - in the process of digestion our bodies turn that carotein into Vitamin A. Cows do that too - when they eat grass - and then pass the Vitamin A on to us in milk, or butter, or cheese.
168. FREYMAN: Then greens give us some of the same food values as milk and butter do.
169. BARTLETT: They give us about the same vitamins as milk and butter - Vitamin A, and two of the B Vitamins - niacin and thiamine. And greens give us some other food values we need. Vitamins aren't everything, you know.
170. FREYMAN: I know. We need minerals - for one thing.
171. BARTLETT: And that's just what greens give us. All green, leafy vegetables contain iron - the mineral that helps to build good red blood.
172. FREYMAN: Well, I must say I have a greater respect for greens - now that I know what they contain.
173. BARTLETT: They deserve our respect. And we deserve greens. Every single one of us ought to eat some every day.

174. FREYMAN: Well - there's no reason why everybody can't eat some - at least in summer, when they're growing wild. If we all have that Consumer Tips Card to tell us what to pick ---
175. BARTLETT: That Tips Card should be a big help. Wish I'd had a copy of that when I was a boy. That used to be one of my favorite pastimes down in Maine - browsing through the woods in search of nuts and other things that were good to eat.
176. FREYMAN: Too bad that city children can't have some of that fun.
177. BARTLETT: Well, they don't have as much chance to find greens, of course, but they should be able to find some. Every city lot contains a few dandelions - and usually other edible weeds. And any boy who wanted to earn some extra money after school hours could probably find himself a job digging dandelions out of people's lawns.
178. FREYMAN: And come home with the money and a salad too.
179. BARTLETT: Yes, at least the young ones would make a salad. Wish I had had that Tips Card when I was a boy.
180. FREYMAN: Well, I want one right now. How about it, Johnny?
181. JOHN: All you need to do to get it is drop a line to CONSUMER TIME - Department of Agriculture - Washington, D. C.

182. BARTLETT: And -- if I remember rightly -- we're supposed to tell you the call letters of our radio station, as well as our own name and address.
183. JOHN: That's it. And -- I want to thank you, Mr. Bartlett, for coming here and giving us the vital facts about green vegetables.
184. BARTLETT: Glad to do it, Johnny. I hope that every one of your listeners will write in for that Tips Card.
185. JOHN: I'll repeat the directions again. But first I think they'd like to hear what ration stamps are valid now.
186. FREYMAN: We certainly would, Johnny. I've come to depend on your ration review. What stamps are good now for buying meats and fats?
187. JOHN: Red stamps E, F, G and H are ~~valid until the end of this month.~~ Red Stamp J will become valid on Monday and may be used through June.
188. FREYMAN: I see.
/And for buying coffee?
189. JOHN: Stamp number twenty-three in War Ration Book One is valid for one pound of coffee -- up till May thirtieth.
190. FREYMAN: How about sugar?

191. JOHN: Stamp number twelve in Book One will let you buy five pounds of sugar any time in May. Now, if you need extra sugar for home-canning - you can use stamps number fifteen and sixteen. Each of these is good starting Monday for buying five extra pounds. And if you really need even more sugar than that for canning you can go to your War Ration Board and get sugar allowance coupons that will let you buy up to a limit of fifteen more pounds for each member of your family.
192. FREYMAN: Well, that's good news. And what about buying canned goods? What stamps do we use now?
193. JOHN: Blue ration stamps G, H, and J are valid through June seventh. And - to pad out your ration of canned vegetables, and save the cans for our soldiers - eat more salads and cooked greens. Your copy of this Consumer Tips Card -- to help you recognize and use wild greens - is here waiting for you. Just write to CONSUMER TIME - Department of Agriculture - Washington, D. C. Tell us you want the tips on greens, and add your own name and address - with the call letters of the radio station on which you heard this program.
194. FREYMAN: All right. And - about next week, Johnny --
195. JOHN: Yes?

196. FREYMAN: Well, remember - a couple of weeks ago - we were planning to have a program on how to avoid wasting food?
197. JOHN: Yes - and then our broadcast was postponed to make room for General Eisenhower's speech.
198. FREYMAN: Well, was it just postponed? Are we going to have that program sometime?
199. JOHN: You want to have it next week?
200. FREYMAN: All of us consumers would. We don't want to go on wasting ten percent of the food we buy. Not if we can find out how to stop it.
201. JOHN: Okay then. Next week we'll have a program telling how to starve the garbage pail.
202. FREYMAN: Fine then. I'll be here.

203. ANNOUNCER: And meanwhile we'll be expecting to receive your request for the Consumer Tips Card that tells about edible wild greens -- what they look like, where they grow, and how you can use them to feed your family more of the vitamins and minerals they need. Just write to CONSUMER TIME -- Department of Agriculture -- Washington, D. C. And ask for the tips on greens. We'll need to know your own name and address, of course -- and the call letters of your radio station.

Heard on today's program were:

Script by Jane Ashman.

CONSUMER TIME is a public service of NBC and the associated radio stations -- presented by the Food Distribution Administration of the Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with other Government agencies working for consumers.

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